

NEW JERSEY HUMAN RELATIONS COUNCIL BY-LAWS

Article I. NAME

The Council shall be a permanent, independent body in but not of the Department of Law and Public Safety. The name of this body shall be the New Jersey Human Relations Council, as created by N.J.S.A. 52:9 DD-8.

Article II. PURPOSE

The purpose of the New Jersey Human Relations Council shall be to promote "prejudice-reduction" education and address the problems of bias and violent acts based on the victim's race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender or disability.

Article III. DUTIES

It shall be the duty of the Council to:

- a. develop policy proposals for the State and assist with coordinating efforts to promote "prejudice reduction" and prevent and deter crimes based upon the victim's race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or physical, mental or cognitive disability;
- b. assist in diffusing tensions in communities affected by such crimes;
- c. act as a clearinghouse for information and program ideas among the existing county human relations commissions;
- d. assist the efforts of the county human relations commissions in relieving tensions within the community;
- e. assist in providing training programs for members of the county human relations commissions and other interested community leaders;
- f. develop and present a biennial report to the Governor and Legislature on the status of bias and violence based upon race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or physical, mental or cognitive disability;
- g. establish and maintain a listing of conflict resolution programs and experts to be available as a resource for communities in time of crisis;
- h. develop in conjunction with law enforcement agencies, including the Office of Bias Crimes and Community Relations in the Division of Criminal Justice, and the educational community, cultural diversity training for law enforcement personnel;
- i. develop in conjunction with the Department of Education and the educational, civil rights and human relations communities educational programs intended to educate,

encourage, develop, promote and strengthen respect for human rights and cultural diversity and prevent and combat racism, intolerance and bigotry;

- j. assist local communities in establishing local human relations commissions;
- k. assess changes in local demographics and assist communities in adapting to minority population shifts;
- l. assist State, county and local government agencies with multi-cultural awareness and cultural diversity programs;
- m. require that the representatives from the county human relations commissions report back to the counties regarding the work and activities of the State Council;
- n. provide conciliation assistance and conduct all activities in confidence and without publicity;
- o. make recommendations to governmental entities for the development of policies and procedures in general and for programs of formal and informal education that will aid in eliminating all types of discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or physical, mental or cognitive disability; and
- p. implement any other duties as designated by the Legislature or as determined by this Council, consistent with N.J.S.A. 52:9 DD-8, et seq.

Article IV. POWERS

Section 1. Powers of the Council

As set forth in N.J.S.A. 52: 9 DD-11, the Council shall have power to:

- a. conduct public hearings throughout the State;
- b. establish subcommittees;
- c. perform fact-finding functions and prepare reports on particular issues regarding race, color, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, gender, or physical, mental or cognitive disability;
- d. call to its assistance and avail itself of the services of any official of this State and its political subdivisions and their departments, boards, bureaus, commissions and agencies as it may require and may expend any funds appropriated or otherwise made available to it;
- e. appoint persons to attend meetings and to serve in an advisory capacity to the Council and/or its committees;
- f. elect officers from among the public members;
- g. perform any other act as designated by the Legislature or determined by this Council consistent with N.J.S.A. 52:9 DD-8, et seq.

Section 2. Powers of the Public Members.

The public members shall have power to:

- a. adopt the By-Laws to govern the Council;
- b. designate the terms of office of each public member pursuant to N.J.S.A. 52:9 DD-8c; and
- c. notify the appropriate appointing authority of vacancies on the Executive Committee.

Article V. MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Executive Committee.

- a. The executive committee shall include ten (10) public members who shall be representative of the various ethnic, religious, national origin, racial, sexual orientation, gender, and disabilities organizations in this State; of whom:

O four (4) shall be appointed by the Governor, no more than two (2) of whom shall be of the same political party;

O three (3) shall be appointed by the President of the Senate, no more than two (2) of whom shall be of the same political party:

O three (3) shall be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, no more than two of whom shall be of the same political party; and

- b. Two members of the Senate appointed by the President of the Senate, no more than one (1) of whom shall be of the same political party;
- c. Two (2) members of the General Assembly shall be appointed by the Speaker of the General Assembly, no more than one (1) of whom shall be of the same political party;
- d. seven (7) county human relations commission representatives; and
- e. ex-officio members

Section 2. Ex-Officio Members.

A. Ex-officio members shall consist of:

- 1) Attorney General of the State of New Jersey,
- 2) Commissioner of the Department of Education,
- 3) Commissioner of the Department of Community Affairs,
- 4) Commissioner of the Department of Corrections,
- 5) Commissioner of the Department of Human Services,
- 6) Public Defender,
- 7) the Director of the Administrative Office of the Courts,
- 8) Director of the Division of Criminal Justice,
- 9) Superintendent of the Division of State Police,
- 10) Director of the Division on Civil Rights,
- 11) President of the County Prosecutors Association of New Jersey,
- 12) President of the New Jersey State Association of Chiefs of Police,
- 13) President of the Bias Crime Officers Association of New Jersey,
- 14) county Superintendent of Schools selected by the Commissioner of the Department of Education,
- 15) President of the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association, and
- 16) President of the New Jersey Education Association.

B. Each ex-officio member may designate a person from the member's department or agency to represent and to act on behalf of, and in the capacity of the member at any Council meeting.

Section 3. Filling Vacancies.

Vacancies on the Council shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment to complete the unexpired term.

Section 4. Compensation.

The members of the Council shall serve without compensation.

Article VI. OFFICERS

Section 1.

The officers of the Council shall be a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, and other officers as the Council may designate.

Section 2.

All officers shall be elected for terms of one (1) year and shall serve until their successors are elected. No officer shall serve for more than three (3) consecutive terms in the same position. All officers of the Council shall be elected from among the public members of the Council at the last regularly scheduled meeting of the calendar year.

Section 3. Chair

The Chair shall:

- a. preside over all meetings of the Council;
- b. see that all resolutions of the Council are put into effect;
- c. exercise general oversight and direction of the officers of the Council;
- d. call special meetings of the Council whenever deemed necessary,
- e. serve as ex-officio member of all committees;
- f. notify the appropriate appointing authority of any vacancy which occurs on the Executive Committee;
- g. form and appoint members to such committees as may be needed to effectuate the powers and duties of the Council;
- h. serve as the only public spokesperson on behalf of the Council and shall speak only on those issues and policies on which the Council has deliberated and adopted a position. The Chair may designate an alternative spokesperson from among the Council members to speak on behalf of the Council on specific issues.

Section 4. Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair shall:

- a. perform the duties of the Chair in event of the Chair's absence, resignation or inability to perform the duties of the Chair;
- b. assist the Chair in the performance of her/his duties.

Section 5. Treasurer

The Treasurer shall:

- a. act as fiscal officer for the Council;
- b. submit a report at each meeting and an annual report;
- c. recommend to the Council for its approval by resolution, a budget request to be submitted to the Legislature for an annual appropriation to the Council.

Section 6. Secretary

The Secretary shall:

- a. establish an agenda in conjunction with the Chair for meetings of the Council and ensure compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act;
- b. direct the taking of minutes and maintenance of correspondence and records of the Council in conjunction with the Office of Bias Crimes and Community Relations, Division of Criminal Justice.

Article VII. MEETINGS

Meetings of the Council:

- a. Regular meetings of the Council shall be held not less than four (4) times each calendar year.
- b. The Chair in the call for each meeting, unless otherwise determined by the Council shall fix the time and place of the regular meetings. The Council may provide for additional regular and special meetings by resolution adopted at any meeting.
- c. Advance notice effective upon mailing, shall be given to members of any meeting of the Council. Public notification of the meetings of the Council will be in accordance with the Open Public Meetings Act.
- d. Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the conduct of all Council meetings except when in conflict with these By-Laws or any law of the State of New Jersey..
- e. Special meetings may be called at the request of 51% or more of those currently appointed to the Council , provided that all notifications are made in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act.

Article VIII. COMMITTEES

Section 1. The Standing Committees of the Council are:

A. Education Committee. The purpose of this committee is to promote “prejudice-reduction” education for youth and adults. Activities may include but are not limited to:

- 1) identifying existing cultural diversity and conflict resolution training programs and other resources that can be used in schools, the workforce and by human relations commissions;
- 2) working with the Department of Education to evaluate and enhance human rights and cultural diversity programs in the school curriculum;
- 3) preparing reports and recommendations as needed regarding educational issues; and
- 4) assisting State, county and local government agencies with multi-cultural awareness programs;
- 5) working with the Human Relations Commissions Liaison Committee to provide training and other resources to county and local human relations commissions.

B. Community Outreach Committee. The purpose of this committee is to develop communication between the Council and the public, regarding the activities of the Council and various human relations’ issues. Activities may include but are not limited to:

- 1) identifying and meeting with community-based organizations, businesses, members of the religious community, youth, and/or other individuals who can serve in an advisory capacity to the Council;
- 2) devising outreach programs to promote awareness of human relations issues and the work of the Council;
- 3) presenting recommendations obtained from community outreach to the Council; and
- 4) preparing reports summarizing the input from the various community organizations and presenting same to the Council;
- 5) working with the Law Enforcement and Community Relations – Crisis Intervention Committee, the Human Relations Commissions Liaison Committee and other committees as necessary.

C. Law Enforcement and Community Relations - Crisis Intervention. This committee will facilitate dialog between law enforcement and the community, and address bias crime and other human relations issues of concern. Activities may include but are not limited to:

- 1) developing policy proposals and assisting with the coordination of efforts to promote “prejudice-reduction” and prevent/deter bias crime;
- 2) assisting in diffusing tensions in communities experiencing difficulties stemming from the commission of bias incidents and/or crimes. This committee will work in conjunction with the Human Relations Commissions Liaison Committee, the Community Outreach Committee and other committees as needed;

- 3) working with the Education Committee and the Office of Bias Crimes and Community Relations to recommend cultural diversity training programs for law enforcement personnel;
- 4) providing conciliation assistance as needed, keeping all such activities confidential; and
- 5) issuing reports and recommendations concerning law enforcement and community relations, and the prevention of bias crime.

D. Policy and Reports Committee. The purpose of this committee is to compile reports and recommendations that represent the findings and positions of the Council. Activities may include but are not limited to:

- 1) working in conjunction with other committees to develop policy proposals which will promote "prejudice-reduction" and prevent/deter bias crimes and incidents;
- 2) developing and presenting a biennial report to the Governor and the Legislature on behalf of the Council;
- 3) assessing changes in local demographics which will assist communities in adapting to demographic shifts;
- 4) making recommendations to governmental agencies for the development of policies and procedures; as well as for formal and informal education programs that will aid in eliminating all types of discrimination; and
- 5) preparing policy statements that represent the consensus of the Council.

E. Human Relations Commissions Liaison Committee. The purpose of this committee will be to communicate with and assist county and local human relations commissions in achieving their objectives. Activities may include but are not limited to:

- 1) serving as a clearinghouse for information and program ideas which will be shared with all county and local human relations commissions;
- 2) assisting the efforts of the county and local human relations commissions in relieving tensions within the community. This committee will work in conjunction with the Law Enforcement and Community Relations – Crisis Intervention Committee, Community Outreach Committee, and other committees where necessary;
- 3) working with the Education Committee to provide training programs and other resources to the county and local human relations commissions;
- 4) maintaining communication with the county and local human relations commissions as required by N.J.S.A. 53:9 DD-9 (m) and advise the Council regarding this dialog;
- 5) developing reports and recommendations concerning areas of interest to the county and local human relations commissions; and
- 6) assisting communities interested in developing local human relations commissions.

Section 2. Special Committees

Special committees may be appointed by the Council for a stated period to accomplish a specific purpose. At the end of that period, the Council shall decide upon the continuation of each special committee.

Section 3. Committee Chairs.

The Chair of each committee shall be selected from among and by the members of each committee.

Section 4. Committee Reports.

Each committee shall submit to the Council a written annual report of its activities, which shall contain any recommendations found by the Committee to be necessary or advisable.

Section 5. Committee Expenses.

A committee shall not incur expenses on behalf of the Council except as authorized by the Council, nor shall any committee commit the Council by any declaration of policy.

Section 6. Committee Formations

The Council may, by resolution adopted by the members at a meeting appoint Council members to a committee to fill a vacancy, abolish a special committee, or remove a member of a committee without cause. To abolish a standing committee, an amendment to the By-Laws is required

Article IX. BY-LAWS

The By-Laws may be amended at any regular meeting of the Council by a two-thirds vote of the currently appointed public members, provided that the amendment has been submitted to the membership in writing at least 30 days prior to that meeting.

Article X. ACTS OF THE COUNCIL

All acts of the Council shall:

- a. be accomplished by resolution; and
- b. require majority vote of those members present at the meeting in which there is a quorum, consisting of fifteen (15) Council members.

Article XI. ACTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

Any act of any Council member or committee shall not bind the Council, and shall be subject to Council approval. No person or committee other than the Council may speak on behalf of the Council without the express approval of the organization.

Article XII. CONFIDENTIALITY

The Council shall hold confidential any information acquired during the course of mediation or dispute resolution.

Article XIII. SAVINGS CLAUSE

In the event any portion of the By-Laws is deemed to be contrary to law or public policy, that provision will be deemed struck from the By-Laws and the remaining provisions will continue in full force and effect.